

D.E.W. DROP IN

Downtown Eastside Women Do Drop In

The Newsletter for the Downtown Eastside Women's Centre

October 2000

Free



Drum Spirit Singers, Daphne Odjig
Wikwimenikong Reserve, Manitoulin Island

Harvest Dinner

October 12, Thursday

Seatings at 12 noon, 1 pm & 2 pm.

Tickets will be available on Oct 9, Monday.

大豐收大餐 十月十四日 婦女中心
請於十月九日索取門票。歡迎！

Women's Centre Guidelines

This is a woman & children only space. A man can come in and ask for a woman, he will be asked to wait outside the Front Door. Please let your boyfriend, husband, brother and friends know about our policy. If you do not want your male partner to know that you're in the Centre, please let the Front Desk Volunteer know. Sometimes there are men doing repairs in the Centre, we will try to let you know beforehand.

Clean up after yourself – put dishes in bins, put garbage in garbage can, tidy up where you're sitting.

Clothing room – keep it clean, put away clothes neatly if you don't need them. A bit of folding won't hurt. Only 10 items per woman. If you need a jacket or a pair of jeans, please only take ONE jacket and ONE pair of jeans. Save some for other women, maybe one time you'll be the woman who needs that jacket for the night.

Donations – please help carry donations back to the Clothing Room. We have a very small space in the Clothing room. Extra stuff will be put out on the table for taking.

Look after your own belongings and if you see anyone taking other women's belongings, let a staff or volunteer know right away.

Laundry – free washer and dryer for women on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays. Laundry is reserved for volunteers on Monday, Thursdays and Sundays. First come first served, please sign up on the wall across the coffee urns.

Smoking – the Centre is a non-smoking environment. You can smoke outside at the front entrance. Volunteers can smoke in the back area.

Phones – you can use the Women's phone for 5 minutes. If you're put on hold by your worker for a long time, let the next woman in line know. Don't use the Front Desk phone, the Front Desk volunteer needs to answer incoming calls.

Bus Tickets – we only give out bus tickets to women who have doctors' appointments or medical emergencies. We usually verify our appointment over the phone. Volunteers get one set of tickets per day if they work on that day.

No drugs & alcohol – don't use or sell drugs or alcohol while you're here. Many woman come here to get away from that.

Bathrooms – 5 minute limit for the bathroom. 15 minutes for taking a shower. One woman at a time for the bathroom. Please do not use the bathroom for changing clothes. There is

usually a line-up. **ABSOLUTELY NO FIXING IN THE BATHROOM.** Women come to the Centre to get away from drugs & alcohol.

PLEASE TREAT EACH OTHER WITH RESPECT. WE WANT TO MAKE THIS A SAFE SPACE FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN.

NO SWEARING OR PHYSICAL ABUSE.

YOU WILL BE ASKED TO LEAVE THE CENTRE FOR THE DAY IF

- **YOU'RE SWEARING IN THE CENTRE**
- **YOU MADE AN OFFENSIVE COMMENT ABOUT ANOTHER WOMAN'S SEXUAL ORIENTATION, PHYSICAL OR MENTAL DISABILITY, BODY SIZE, RELIGION, CLASS, AGE, ANCESTRY.**

IF YOU HIT SOMEONE, YOU WILL BE BARRED FROM THE CENTRE IMMEDIATELY UNTIL THE NEXT STAFF MEETING.

A few more words from our Stopping the Violence Counsellor, Carol Martin.

Discrimination means treating someone in a less favourable way than others are treated in the same situation. We at the Centre would like to promote an environment that is free from discrimination where all are treated with respect and dignity.

Staff, volunteers and members of the Centre have a right to place where they are not treated less favourably than others in the same situations. This includes being treated fairly regardless of race, colour, class, age, ancestry, place of origin, religion, family status, marital status, physical ability, mental ability, body size, sexual orientation, or political belief.

Behaviour

Women who use the Centre are expected to treat each other and staff with courtesy and respect. Anyone who contravenes this expectation shall be dealt with. This rule applies equally to women who are drunk or under the influence of drugs.

New Staff Women
Here are the new women joining our Staff Team!



Interim Executive Director - Lauren Howes

Some of you might recognize Lauren from our last year's Board of Directors or the Food Bank. Lauren was the co-chair of the 1999-2000 DEWC Board and she has seen us through some tough moments in the last few months. She is now appointed by the current Board to take on some Executive Director's responsibilities until we find a permanent Executive Director. Prior to joining us, Lauren worked at the Food Bank as FoodRunners' Program Coordinator, which means she also makes sure that the Women's Centre gets yummy food donations. In her leisurely activities (if she has any spare time at all), Lauren plays drums (she will start a drum group for the women, that's why we offer her a contract, hint...hint...). Yes, she used to be a punk rocker. So, next time when you look at her, use your imagination.

Programmer - Jennifer England

So, we finally got a Programmer. You will be relieved to know that our new Programmer has a very strong background in outdoor activities and all sorts of recreational planning. Jennifer has worked extensively with marginalized youth populations and she has volunteered with the Aboriginal Women's Action Network and with us, the Women's Centre. She helped us with last year's Healing Gathering at Lytton, the Women's Retreat at Camp Fircom (Gambier Island) and she also co-facilitated the Popular Education Group! Welcome, Jennifer!

A MESSAGE FROM VERA

MY CO-WORKERS, VOLUNTEERS AND FRIENDS,

HI LADIES. I'M VERY HAPPY TO BE BACK TO WORK HERE AT THE WOMEN'S CENTRE. I ENJOY WORKING HERE WITH YOU ALL. I NEVER GET A CHANCE TO THANK YOU LADIES FOR THE GIFTS AND CARDS. I RECEIVED FROM YOU WHEN I WENT ON THE LEAVE. THANK-YOU VERY MUCH FOR ALL YOUR SUPPORT THAT YOU GAVE TO ME. I APPRECIATE IT VERY MUCH.

ALL MY RELATIONS,

VERA BERNARD

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A GOODBYE FROM YOUR FRIENDS THE FUNDRAISERS

Some of you may already know that Drew and I are leaving our employment with the Women's Centre as of November 3rd. We have worked here for exactly three years and it is time for a change for both of us. Drew will be taking over our other job as Director of the Out On Screen Queer Film and Video Festival. I am going travelling for a couple of months and will be back looking for work in January 2001.

I want to thank all the women who we came to know over the years for welcoming us and always treating us with respect. When we came to the Centre we were strangers to you and to the Women's Centre. You gave us a chance to be part of this community and we really appreciate it.

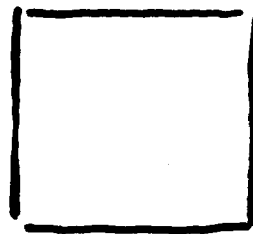
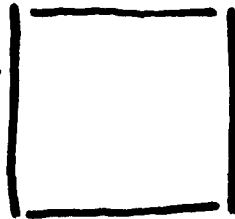
When Drew and I came to the Women's Centre, we knew the work would be a challenge. We had some things in mind that we wanted to achieve and I'm pleased to say that we have achieved most of these. We wanted to increase government and foundation funding, get a reliable annual campaign of direct mail going, raise the profile of the women's centre and start an endowment fund where people could leave large gifts from their wills. One thing that we did not achieve was establishing an annual fundraising event that would be the hallmark of the Women's Centre. This we will leave to the next person.

The organization is in good stead financially. We have had a surplus for the last few years. Things are going to be tight this year. It's possible that we may see a deficit because we've had a lot of extra costs and because it is going to take time for the new fundraiser to get on her feet. The organization is financially healthy enough to handle a deficit for one year so don't worry if that happens.

I hope you will welcome the new fundraiser with the same warmth that you extended to us. This will help her feel good about her work and do a better job for the Centre. I wish you all the best of luck with everything. Take care of yourselves and each other.

With warmest wishes,
Alix

for
alix's
picture!



for
drew's pic!



a farewell from denise, the volunteer coordinator.....as the grapevine works better than any word, some of you might know that i am leaving the centre. following the sun, i am hoping to relocate to san francisco in the next few months. i will miss the volunteers and all the women i have worked with. i will always remember the intensity, feel the sadness, and hear the laughter, altogether in a mixed batch of what the women's centre came to be. privileged to move by choice, i will continue to look for where i belong and cross borders of all sorts. i wish you all the strength in helping the women's centre make its move into bridge housing. with tremendous respect, i shall sign off here.

END LEGISLATED POVERTY

End Legislated Poverty will be starting a second Organizer's Training Group at the Downtown East Women Center. This six-week group will begin Tuesday October 3 and run every Tuesday evening until November 7.

This is the second time around for this group. The last time it ran the feedback was really positive. One of the outcomes from this group was the production of a petition postcard which you have probably seen around.

The purpose of this group is to learn about organizing political actions or to take on (poverty related) issues where you want to see changes. For example, you may think that Welfare rates should be increased. In the group you could learn more about organizing demonstrations, letter writing campaigns, lobbying government officials, etc. in order to pressure them into raising welfare rates.

As this is a new group for the women's centre it will be developed to be flexible to reflect the needs identified by the women who participate. One of the issues raised from the last group was that too many issues were identified to be worked on. Usually, that means that things do not get follow through on and people get disappointed. An idea has been suggested that the group start with a beginner's level of organizers training. Meaning that the six weeks will work around how to organize, where to begin, what types of things to consider, etc. The next round of the group could then move into middle level organizers training, and then advanced organizers training. This way, women will work through the process developing a solid base of knowledge and skills.

If you are interested in this group or want more information talk to Alice in office A.

Again, as this is "project based" it will be a closed group. Women must attend the first or second week. If not you cannot attend the group. However, it will come back again so keep a look out in the calendar.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

A BIG THANK YOU TO THE UNITED NATIVE NATIONS FOR THE DONATION OF THE LONG TABLES. Now the women have decent tables to sit down and have their hot meals, soup & sandwiches.
A word of thanks to Alice for picking up the tables, too.

CANCELLATION

The First Aid Workshop scheduled on October 5 & 6 have to be cancelled. Our instructor, Vern, has a family medical emergency on those dates. He sends his apologies for the inconvenience.

Hi! Meow! Greetings!

*Christmas is coming and there are lots of things to make in the Sewing Department:
Fancy Christmas Stockings, etc.*

There is lots of wool to use and learn how to knit and crochet...lots of things. There is also lots of material to make those carry bags you like so well.

Come and have fun while learning to run the sewing machines or a pair of knitting needles.

Cheerio,

Freedra Elliott

DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE WOMEN'S CENTRE

44 East Cordova Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6A 1K2

Front Desk: 681 - 8480 Women's Line: 681-7458

**LUNCH SERVED
DAILY AT 12:30**

OCTOBER 2000

REGULAR PROGRAMMING

Learning Group - Every Monday, doors close at 5:15. Exploring different ways of Learning with elder, Bernice Hammersmith.

The **Street Nurse** is here every Wednesday from 10:30 - 12:00 to give you information on all kinds of health issues.

Popular Education Group - Wednesday from 5:00 - 8:00, Share the skills that you have to make changes in your life. Meet with like-minded women to organize events.

Women's Voice - Every Thursday. 1:30. Let us know what you think about the Centre. Your opinions and ideas are needed.

Women Surviving Together - Every Thursday, 5 pm. Healing Circle and support group for women. Facilitated by elder Reta Blind and Stopping the Violence Counselor, Carol Martin.

Creative Writing Group - Every Thursday, 6 pm. Metis performer & playwright, Marie Clements, offers her talents to women interested in creative writing. She will meet women at the Centre at 5:50 pm and walk over to Firehall Arts Centre (280 East Cordova) for the group.

Support Gathering for Women who are HIV+/AIDS - Every Friday, 12:30 - 3:30 pm. Meshell and Donna (from DAMS) will be facilitating this group at DAMS (167 West Pender). Join us for good food, great conversations and company as we focus on different topics and issues concerning the daily lives of women who are affected by HIV/AIDS.

ARTS & CRAFTS WORKSHOPS: Materials provided.

Beading with Leona - Every Monday, 1:30 pm. Learn how to bead, expand your skills or just share ideas.

Fabric Arts with Freeda - Every Friday morning, 10:30. Learn to do your own sewing and alterations and also to knit and crochet.

Dreamcatchers with Beverly and her friend, every Thursday at 1:30. Expand your skills and share stories with other women.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2 1:30 Beading 5:00 Learning Group	3 5:00 Organizers' Training with End Legislated Poverty	4 2:00 Volunteer Orientation 10:30 Street Nurse 5:00 Popular Education	5 1:30 Women's Voice 2:00 Dreamcatchers 5:00 Healing Circle 5:50 Creative Writing Group (Firehall Arts Centre, 280 East Cordova)	6 10:30 Sewing and Alterations 12:30 - 3:30 HIV+/AIDS Support Group at DAMS (167 West Pender St.)	7
8 5:00 Volunteer Meeting	9 SALE Tickets Available for Harvest Dinner 1:30 Beading 5:00 Learning Group	10 5:00 Organizers' Training with End Legislated Poverty	11 10:30 Street Nurse 5:00 Popular Education	12 HARVEST DINNER Seatings at 12 noon, 1 pm & 2 pm.	13 10:30 Sewing, etc. 12:30 - 3:30 HIV+/AIDS Support Group at DAMS	14
15 5:00 Volunteer Orientation (this time, FOR SURE!)	16 1:30 Beading 5:00 Learning Group	17 WOMEN'S WORLD MARCH 4:00 look out for posters	18 10:30 Street Nurse 5:00 Popular Education	19 1:30 Women's Voice 2:00 Dreamcatchers 5:00 Healing Circle 5:50 Creative Writing Group	20 10:30 Sewing, etc. 12:30 - 3:30 HIV+/AIDS Support Group at DAMS	21
22	23 1:30 Beading 5:00 Learning Group	24 5:00 Organizers' Training with End Legislated Poverty	25 CHEQUE DAY 10:30 Street Nurse 1:30 Dreamcatchers	26 Centre Closed for All-Day Staff Meeting 5:00 Healing Circle 5:50 Creative Writing Group	27 10:30 Sewing, etc. 12:30 - 3:30 HIV+/AIDS Support Group at DAMS	28
29 5:00 Last Volunteer Meeting with Denise ah!!!	30 1:30 Beading 5:00 Learning Group	31 5:00 Organizers' Training with End Legislated Poverty				

A message from Ilona

My name is Ilona and I am speaking at this march because I care about the women. I volunteer at the Women's Centre because I care about the women who have died. I like to help and associate with other women.

I want to speak at the march because this has gone too far. My abuse is affecting me and I'm getting memories. I've seen abuse, I've seen women die, I see it on TV and the news, when I look outside my window. It doesn't matter where you live, the abuse is everywhere.

Women should be together and share together the abuse of their lives. Women die in the Downtown Eastside from disease and abuse and AIDS and killed and missing.

I have a friend, she's been missing since November. Her name is Angela, she's 28 years old, and I know her from the Portland Hotel. I just found out from a poster that she's missing. She used to come to my hotel room, crying. She was in a really bad situation and I helped her out. I want to pray for her and for all women who are missing and died.

I did the March last February 14. I marched with a cross for my sister, with my sister's name on it. I marched on December 6, too. My sister died from abuse, she was 18 years old.

This is Valentine's Day, it is a special day. Everybody should had laughter, joy and singing. Valentine's Day is a special day for dreaming, light the candles, pray for forgiveness.

But we need to march today because women are killed and missing and nobody cares. I think that the police should do something about this problem because it's gone too far. We women can't stand it anymore. At least when we march we feel inside that the women died; we feel the spirit comes alive. We feel that the women are here, praying with us. After we finish pray the spirit goes back to heaven.

I want people to know that I lost somebody too. My sister died from abuse in 1968. I care about my children, too. My children were taken away from me because welfare said I neglected them. My daughter was abused by my ex-boyfriend and my son was sick. My daughter and my son were really important to me. I want to remember them too.

I want to read this poem. It is dedicated to all the women who have died.

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An update on the Skills Development Project

The intention of the project was to offer training options for volunteers who feel that they are ready to explore the possibilities of employment. The project was for volunteers who would like to use the skills that they learnt from the Volunteer Program in the Women's Centre in other places. So far, we have interviewed 12 volunteers and we found out a few things about the nature of the Project and also about what volunteering means in the Women's Centre. Since this is an option for volunteers, not all volunteers want to be interviewed.

Pam & Melanie (from The Facilitator Group) and myself started off by asking volunteers feedback on what they want from the Volunteer Program. We realized that there are some women who wanted to "move on" in their lives and some women who are not at that place yet. We respect a woman's choice and we are here to facilitate access for women who wants to try something new. As with most things, we also know that it is going to take a long time and it is not going to be easy when we make any new changes within ourselves or within programs. But we believe that there are women who want to make bold steps. We noticed that it has been difficult for the women to think of short-term goals, even though it might be as simple as showing up for shifts.

Having said the above, I am committed to keep this Skills Development part for volunteers who are at that place in their lives. I am also going to pass this message onto the next Volunteer Coordinator who will continue to provide it as an option for all volunteers. She will follow-up on interviews and provide support for you to achieve your goals. Pam will work with the new Volunteer Coordinator on further developing the project. Take care.

Next Volunteer Orientation

October 4 Tuesday 2 pm

October 15 Sunday 5 pm

Next Volunteer Meetings

October 8 Sunday 5 pm

October 29 Sunday 5 pm

Stopping the Violence Worker – Carol

In-Centre Hours:

Wed & Fri 8 am – 5 pm

Thurs 12 noon – 9 pm

Sat 9 am – 5 pm

I'm back again. I'm happy to see all your familiar smiles again. Reta and I facilitate the Women Surviving Together group on Thursdays 5 – 9 pm. I'm here to provide support and counselling for women who are experiencing or have survived violence.

Gentle reminder to those who do participate in our Women Surviving Together group. The Group varies and there are women who will be dealing with really intense issues. The group is a place where everyone can feel comfortable enough to share their experiences, a place to laugh, cry and heal.

Abuse

Abuse is common in many countries of the world. Abused women and their partners can be young or old, rich or poor. They can be well educated, live in big cities or small communities. There are different kinds of abuse.

Physical abuse: punching, slapping, pulling hair, kicking, breaking one's arm, finger or other bones.

Psychological abuse: threats such as threatening to take a partner's children away; threatening to send the children away; threatening to kill; breaking a partner's things, calling names, accusing a partner of having sex with other people, not allowing a partner to go out alone or see her/his family and friends.

Economic abuse: A partner may give her/his spouse very little money for food, clothing and other things. Taking a partner's pay-cheques and not letting her/him work outside of home.

Sexual abuse: Forcing a partner to have sex with them, making the person do sexual things they don't want to.

Physical abuse has a cycle

Part 1: An abuser gets angry for no reason and yells at her/his partner. The partner tries to please the abuser so that s/he doesn't get hit. Part 1 can last for days, weeks or months.

Part 2: The abuser hurts his/her partner and gets very angry. The abuser hits and throws things at the partner. The abuser hurts the partner in some way. The partner feels sad and alone. Feels very afraid, thinks no one can help me. The partner might not know who to talk to.

Part 3: The abuser is sorry. He/she will say they are "sorry." Will tell you "I love you. I will never hit you again." The partner will/might forgive the abuser. Part 3 is often like a honeymoon stage.

But the abuse often gets worse! Abuse occurs over and over and often gets worse.

Abusive persons often think they are the heads of the family. They believe they must have all the power. They believe they must control their partners. Abusers control their partners in what they do, who they talk to, where they go and even what they wear!

Many kinds of abuse are against the law –hitting a partner, physical and death threats, forcing a partner to have sex, stalking a partner, harassing a partner, bothering a partner in the way that make the partner afraid.

Partners can be girlfriends, boyfriends, ex-girlfriends, ex-boyfriends, ex-wives, ex-husbands, common-law wives and common-law husbands in heterosexual and same-sex relationships.

CONGRATULATIONS TO
ABORIGINAL ♀ ACTION NETWORK
& RETA BLIND FOR
completing the JOURNEY FOR JUSTICE!
Aboriginal women's voices
should be HEARD!

Recipes, brought to you by the very active Popular Education group (Wednesday nights)



MY BABY by GERMAINE ARNAKTAUYOK
(YELLOWKNIFE)

Food I like

Dried fish, little salt, boiled potatoes or rice (steamed)

Green vegetables, cabbage, peas.

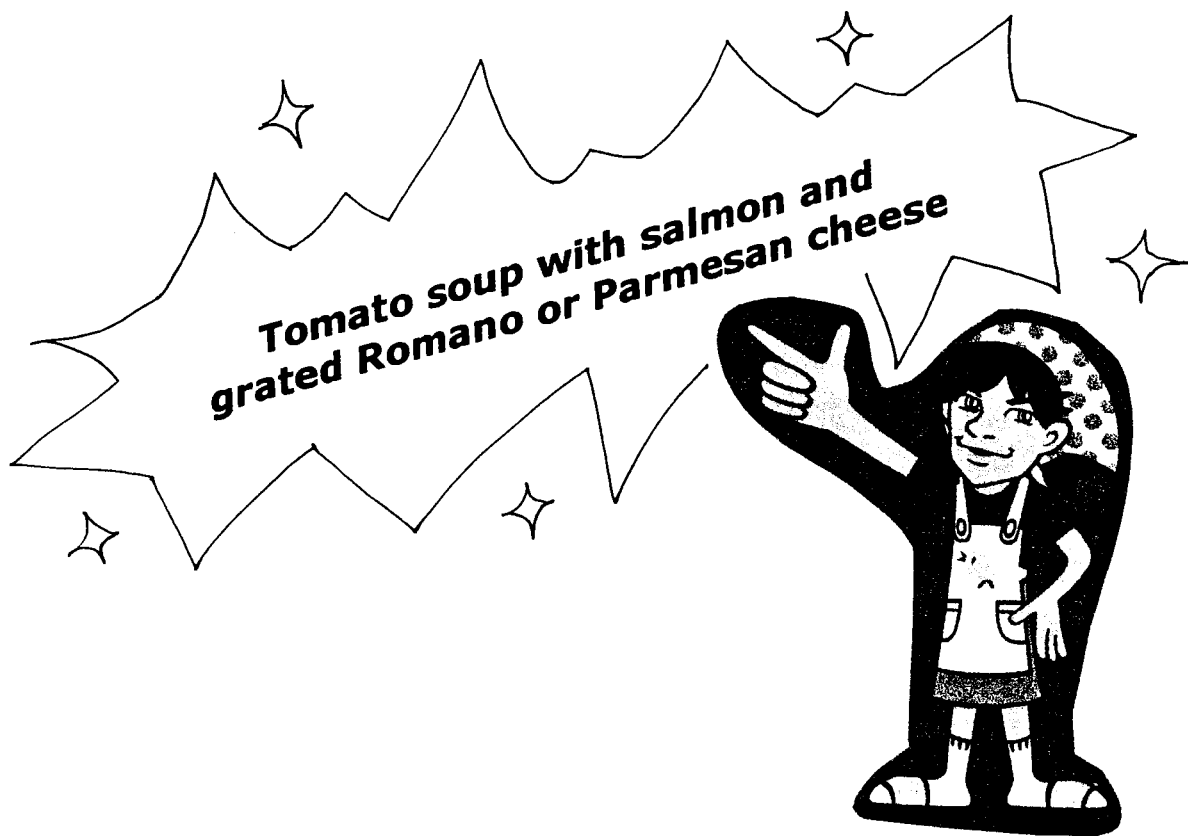
Pot of freshly made tea.

Bowl of huckleberries & whipped cream (or Dream Whip) + bannock.

Shave bannock made ahead of time and vegetables cooked first

Steam vegetables, peas, carrots, then heat fish (oven) or eat like that.

Berries canned, frozen or fresh.



Total cost: \$2.49

1 can of tomato soup 75 cents

1 small can of salmon 99 cents

2 tablespoons grated Romano or Parmesan cheese (or other favourite type of cheese) 75 cents

OR get them from the Food Bank)

Heat soup in pot. Remove the bones from the salmon (and eat them). Add salmon juice and crushed salmon to the soup and heat until hot. Pour into two large bowls then sprinkle cheese on top and serve.

Invisibility
(as the state of being me)

the woman
the single mom
the handicapped
the homosexual
the mentally ill
the desperate
the hungry
the sick
the unkempt
the poor
the skid row resident
the abused
me.

Raven